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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/677,576	10/02/2003	Nancy C. Kerrigan	079793.00004	9299

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EXAMINER

ALIMENTI, SUSAN C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3644

DATE MAILED: 06/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/677,576

Applicant(s)

KERRIGAN, NANCY C.

Examiner

Susan C. Alimenti

Art Unit

3644

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 March 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §§ 102 & 103

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-6, and 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Walsh (US 6,568,001).

Regarding claims 1, 3, and 8, Walsh discloses a system usable as a pet recreation apparatus comprising, in combination, an enclosed storage area 16 inaccessible to a pet, said storage area having drawers 20 and a closet with doors 22, and a rest space 12, 14, with steps 24 leading to said rest space.

With regard to claim 2, rest space 12, 14 are elevated and allow a pet to view outside a window.

With regard to claims 4 and 9, the rest space 12, 14, is considered to be surrounded by sides defined as the top sides of bed frame 12, and having handles defined as the underside of said frame, which can be grasped by a user during transport of the apparatus. With regard to claims 5 and 10, the drawers 22 slide and have handles.

Finally, with regard to claims 6 and 11, rest area includes a mattress 14.

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 7, 12, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walsh.

First regarding claims 7, 12 and 15, Walsh does not positively disclose that the steps and rest area are covered in carpet. It is well known that adding carpet to most objects in the home provides additional padding for comfort, while also increasing traction and cushioning any falls that may occur in the home. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to add carpeting at least to steps 24, top of borough 16 and rest area frame 12 in order to provide comfort, padding, and traction to those climbing up said stairs and traversing said frame to get to rest area 14.

Regarding claim 14 it is first noted that the rest area is supported by and over steps 24, via frame legs 12A. Walsh, however, does not positively discuss the details of the storage area, i.e. whether or not there is a horizontal pole in closet 22. It is known that Walsh intends for the entire storage area 16 to hold clothing and other personal items, and further it is well known that to most closets comprise a horizontal bar for hanging clothing that requires such proper treatment. The examiner takes official notice that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to place a horizontal bar in closet 22 in order to provide a hanging means for clothing.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 28 March 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant contends that the sides in the Walsh reference are inadequate to read on the claimed limitations because they would not prevent an animal from falling off the rest space. This argument is not persuasive since the claims recite no such functional limitations, but only "a rest space surrounded by sides and supported by and over said storage area." Therefore, the prior art must only show a rest area surrounded by sides, and their function is irrelevant. Walsh clearly shows such a structure.

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

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7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susan C. Alimenti whose telephone number is 571-272-6897.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Teri Luu can be reached on 571-272-7045. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

8. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Susan C. Alimenti


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